

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE UNMARRIED MOTHER WHO RELINQUISHES HER CHILD:

A profile of Unmarried Mothers served by
The Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg

Being the report of a Research Group Pro-
ject submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master
of Social Work

By:

Allison, Lorraine
Atkinson, Ferne
Coello, Augusto
Daase, Harry
Deeley, Ann
Jones, Ivor
Kennaugh, Robert
Miller, Sandra
Montgomery, Sheila
Szewczyk, Evelyn

Winnipeg, Manitoba
April, 1970 ✓

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgement is expressed by the authors of this research project to Mr. David Vincent, Research Advisor, University of Manitoba School of Social Work, for his invaluable assistance in all stages of this project; to Professor Glenn Atkinson, Department of Statistics, University of Manitoba; to Mr. W. Bury, Executive Director, The Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg; to Mrs. Isabel Garvey, Supervisor of Services to Unmarried Parents, The Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg; to the Social Workers comprising the Unmarried Mothers' unit; and to the clerical staff, The Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Acknowledgements | i |
| List of Tables and Figures | iii |
| Chapter | |
| 1 Introduction and Theory | 1 |
| 11 Psychological Theories about Unmarried Motherhood | 8 |
| 111 Research Method and Design | 16 |
| 1V Analysis and Presentation of Findings | 25 |
| V Summary and Conclusions | 57 |
| Bibliography | 63 |
| Appendices | 66 |

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

| <u>Figure</u> | | <u>Page</u> |
|------------------|---|-------------|
| 1 | Graph of the distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by age | 27 |
| <u>Table</u> | | |
| 1 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Age | 27 |
| 2 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Education | 29 |
| 3 | Educational level of Unmarried Mothers, according to their Age Distribution | 30 |
| 4 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Ethnic Origin | 32 |
| 5 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Religion | 34 |
| 6 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Occupation | 36 |
| 7 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Living Arrangements | 37 |
| 8 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Type of Financial Arrangements Made | 38 |
| 9 | Financial Arrangements of Unmarried Mothers, by Age | 39 |

| <u>Table</u> | | <u>Page</u> |
|--------------|---|-------------|
| 10 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Marital Status | 41 |
| 11 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Recidivism | 41 |
| 12 | Distribution of Recidivist Group, by Ethnic Origin, as compared to Non-Re- cidivist Group | 43 |
| 13 | Distribution of Recidivists and Non- Recidivists by Education | 44 |
| 14 | Distribution of Recidivists, by Fin- ancial Arrangements | 45 |
| 15 | Distribution of Unmarried Mothers, by Month of Contact | 46 |
| 16 | Number of Putative Fathers who made Financial Contributions | 48 |
| 17 | Comparative Ages of Unmarried Mothers and Putative Fathers | 49 |
| 18 | Education of Unmarried Mothers as com- pared with that of the Putative Father | 50 |
| 19 | Educational Status of the Unmarried Mother as a group compared to the Edu- cational Status of the Putative Father as a group | 51 |

| <u>Table</u> | | <u>Page</u> |
|--------------|---|-------------|
| 20 | Age of the Unmarried Mother as a group compared with the Age of the Putative Father as a group | 52 |
| 21 | Occupational Status of the Unmarried Mother as a group compared with that of the Putative Father as a group | 54 |
| 22 | Marital Status of the Unmarried Mother as a group compared with that of the Putative Father as a group | 56 |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND THEORY

It has been suggested that the purpose of research in the realm of illegitimacy and unmarried parenthood is three-fold:

- 1) to increase understanding of illegitimacy and its concomitants;
- 2) to guide policy and practice in dealing with and trying to prevent illegitimacy; and
- 3) to respond to public concern.¹

The present study, undertaken with the sanction of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, attempts to relate to all of the preceding positions. The purpose of this descriptive study is, specifically, to present an overview of some of the associated characteristics, factors and problems relative to the unmarried mother who relinquishes her child. It is hoped that some of the findings of this study may serve to expand in some significant fashion, or perhaps corroborate the information available concerning the overall problems of illegitimacy, while concurrently providing some guidelines to the

1) Elizabeth Herzog, "Priorities in Research on Unmarried Mothers", in Research Perspectives on the Unmarried Mother, Child Welfare League of America. New York, 1962, p. 32.

formation of policy and implementation of services to the unmarried mother.

Illegitimacy is a problem with which society and its various systems and/or social agencies have been concerned over the years. From a statistical point of view, the problem of illegitimacy seems to have been increasing significantly in recent years. However, statistics must be viewed in the light of the number of persons who fall into the age ranges most affected. For example, within the five year period of 1960 to 1965, the percentage increase in population in the two age groups most directly affected by out-of-wedlock pregnancies were as follows:

- 1) for the 15 to 19 year age group: 29.4%
- 2) for the 20 to 24 year age group: 17.7%

There is evidence to suggest that the increase in out-of-wedlock pregnancies since 1965 has been in the over 20-year age group and this must be expected as the percentage increase in this age group in the population, between 1965 and 1970, is estimated to be 31.3% and the increase for the 15 to 19 year old group is only 15.3%.²

In 1966, in the province of Manitoba, there were 1844 illegitimate births recorded, reflecting 10.2% of the births of the province. For Canada, the rate of illegitimate births

2) Dominion Bureau of Statistics Report, Ottawa. Queen's Printer's Office, 1965, p. 307.

for the same period was 7.6%. In 1967, the number of illegitimate births for the province was 2,037 of the total birth rate of 17,534, while in 1968 the illegitimate rate totalled 2,238 of the larger figure of 17,767 of births record.³

While the number of children born out-of-wedlock each year is increasing, the rate is not out of proportion to the rate of population growth.

Accompanying the increasing rate of illegitimacy have been numerous and varied attempts to provide explanations for the phenomenon. For example, two of the factors presumed by one author to be associated with the rising incidence of pre-marital sexual behaviour are as follows:

(1) Increasing pressure from parents and schools for earlier and earlier maturity, parental anxiety regarding "popularity" and the insistence upon a busy social life. Pressures from both parents and peers have pushed the problems of early adolescence back into the latency period.

(2) Parental permissiveness. Sex is almost the only adult privilege not freely afforded to the adolescent. It then becomes a means to express independence and maturity.⁴

3) Annual Report, Department of Health & Social Services, Province of Manitoba. Winnipeg, 1969, Table 11.

4) Elizabeth Ferguson, "The Social Revolution in Sexual Behaviour and Standards", in *Illegitimacy, Date and Findings for Prevention, Treatment and Policy Formulation*. New York, National Council of Illegitimacy, 1965, p. 114.

Indications are that sex education in terms of morality cannot solve the problem, as the older norms no longer control the thinking and behaviour of the younger generation. The conviction prevalent among young people to-day is that their behaviour is their own business, and the lack of guilt regarding behaviour of which their elders disapprove indicates that we are indeed witnessing a "sexual revolution".⁵

Over the years, two distinct schools of thought have been developed to provide casual explanations for the problem of illegitimacy. One group of theoreticians stress the social factors, using "vital statistics as their foundation and focus on group behaviour", while the other group "formulates psychological explanations of illegitimacy focused upon intra-psychic factors within individuals".⁶

With respect to the first group, who rest upon the sociological explanation of the phenomenon, three different theoretical positions have been formulated. These are defined as (a) cultural relativism, (b) cultural absolutism, and (c) cultural relationism. The first theory, cultural relativism, states that illegitimacy is "subject to the value system of the group within which it occurs and that various

5) Ibid., p. 115.

6) Robert N. Roberts, "A Theoretical Overview of the Unwed Mother" in The Unwed Mother. New York: Harper and Row, 1966, p. 13.

cultural groups may not have norms opposed to illegitimacy".⁷ The theory of cultural absolutism regards illegitimacy as an absolute norm ... that is, that illegitimacy, like incest, is under a universal and inviolate taboo in any society.⁸ Finally, the position of cultural relationism believes that "a society may, while holding negative sanctions against illegitimacy, at the same time maintain permissive norms about related behaviour".⁹ For example, a culture may regard illegitimacy as undesirable, while accepting a permissive attitude toward non-marital sexual behaviour. According to this viewpoint, it would seem that those individuals and groups who hold a permissive attitude in reference to non-marital sexual intercourse, negative norms toward illegitimacy, and norms which oppose birth control, abortion and adoption will be those who become unmarried mothers and keep their children. Those who hold restrictive norms about non-marital intercourse, negative norms regarding illegitimacy and more permissive norms about birth control, induced abortion and adoption are less likely to become unmarried mothers or, if they do find themselves in the predicament, are less likely to keep their illegitimate children.¹⁰

7) Robert N. Roberts (op. cit.) p. 14.

8) Robert N. Roberts (op. cit.) p. 15.

9) Robert N. Roberts (op. cit.) p. 17.

10) Robert N. Roberts (op. cit.) p. 18.

The phenomenon of illegitimacy is pervasive; its incidence is irrespective of social or economic class, religion, ethnic background, race or educational level. Indeed, its only limitation is the fact that it is restricted to women of childbearing age. Partly because of its pervasiveness, illegitimacy is considered to be a social problem. By definition, a social problem has been described as "a complex of behaviour and/or circumstances which by its consequences threatens or adversely affects the institutions, mores, standards and beliefs that are valued, that is emotionally invested, by most members of society".¹¹ The general attitude held by this society is that a child is more likely to grow and develop into a stable individual and an able contributor to the society if he is a part of a lasting family unit comprised of parents who are legally married to each other. Social work theory would attest that a stable family unit, with or without the legal component, is conducive to "normal" social and emotional adjustment. In view of the fact that the presence of illegitimacy, and more specifically the unmarried mother, threatens the institution of the nuclear family, further identification is made in terms of a social problem.

Also, the unmarried mother "presents a threat to the community's value system.....violates its standards of be-

11) Helen Perlman, "Unmarried Mothers" in Social Work and Social Problems, New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1964, p.270. (Natan E. Cohen, editor)

haviour.....and creates economic and social dilemmas.¹² Her problem does not occur in isolation, it relates to the child and the community. Though compassionate in varying degrees, society is not yet sufficiently tolerant, nor willing, nor ready to accept the burden of raising an out-of-wedlock baby. When the basic structure of the family unit upon which our society is organized is lacking or deviates from the norm, the community is affected in many ways. The unmarried mother and her child become a challenge in terms of health and welfare resources, housing and educational facilities.¹³

12) Helen Perlman, (op. cit.), p. 278.

13) J. Parker and F. Nelson, "The Unmarried Mother and her Child: the Problems and the Challenges" in Illegitimacy, Data and Findings for Prevention, Treatment and Policy Formulation, New York: National Council of Illegitimacy, 1965, p. 194.

CHAPTER 11

PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES ABOUT UNMARRIED MOTHERHOOD

Some authorities, most notably Leontine Young, while acknowledging that unwed motherhood is a social problem, propose that out of wedlock pregnancy has its cause in the personality patterns of the individual girl. They propose that conception of an out of wedlock child represents an acting out of unconscious conflicts in the girl which have arisen from poor relationships with one or both of her parents. Thus conception is seen as a symptom, a way the girl has unconsciously chosen to have her need met despite the possibility of negative sanctions from society.

Young studied the family backgrounds of 100 girls served by an unmarried mother agency. She found that none of these girls had had satisfactory relationships with their parents. They also had difficulty in developing intimate relationships with others in their lives. In most cases, the relationship with the putative father was unsatisfactory, in the girl's own eyes. Most of the girls (83% of the total) had come from families where one parent dominated the family to an unhealthy extent. It was concluded that the desire for a baby but not for a husband was an attempt to satisfy infantile fantasies about the father and to get revenge against the mother for not having met the girl's needs, either because

the mother was too dominant and rejecting or too weak. Young notes that another common trend among these girls was a tendency to self-punishment, which was thought to be another factor in their choice of unwed pregnancy as a solution to their problem.¹⁴

One of the major defects of this study is that the sample excluded girls whose cultural background did not place heavy negative sanctions on illegitimacy.

The unmarried girl who finds herself pregnant, no matter what her conscious or unconscious wishes may have been regarding the baby, finds herself in a difficult position in relation to society. Her pregnancy is evidence to others that she has not only broken society's stated norms against illicit coition, however inconsistent these may be, but also that she has been 'caught'; others may see her, and she may see herself, as disgraced.¹⁵ She must go through the ordeal of deciding whether, when and how to tell her parents and friends. She may find herself rejected by many of the people most important to her, including the putative father.¹⁶ If she receives acceptance and support from these people and if they are not in a financial position which allows them to

14) Leontine Young, "Personality Patterns in Unmarried Mothers" in The Unwed Mother. New York: Harper and Row, 1966, pp. 81-94.

15) Helen Perlman, (op. cit., 272)

16) Helen Perlman, (op. cit.), p. 280.

help her out, she may still be in need of concrete help such as finances or a place to stay while she is pregnant.

Adding to the unmarried mother's vulnerability is the fact that pregnancy is by nature a time when the woman feels an especially strong need to feel that she is able to depend on her environment and receive support and comfort from it. She becomes preoccupied with her physical condition and the mixture of emotions which accompany impending motherhood. The time after the child is born, when she will assume the role of mother or resume her former status in society, may seem remote.¹⁷ If this is her first child, she may experience considerable anxiety at the prospect of childbirth. Good medical care, proper diet and exercise, are important. And finally, she is faced with the necessity of making a decision about whether to keep or to relinquish her child. In sum, the social and emotional environment in which an unmarried mother waits out her pregnancy is an important consideration, if she is to weather the crisis of unmarried motherhood in the healthiest manner possible, given her age, upbringing, and personality structure.

The girl who eventually relinquishes her child for adoption finds herself facing all of the above difficulties. If she decides early in her pregnancy that, consciously at least,

17) Helen Perlman, Ibid., p. 296.

she does not want to keep the child and wants to conceal her pregnancy as best she can and resume her former position in society after it is over, she may wish to move to another city. Here again, she will need adequate environmental support, and may find herself alone and without friends. A girl might also stay in her home community, but seek concealment and shelter in a maternity home, for which she may need financial resources.

Agency workers find that sometimes a girl who is planning to relinquish may try to deny to herself, as well as to others, that she is pregnant. She will also deny possible feelings of guilt or anxiety connected with her pregnancy. If she plans to relinquish the child, the girl must be helped to recognize her feelings, weigh out the various factors involved in the decision, and work through the feelings of guilt and loss mixed with relief when she comes to the point of giving up her own child. She may also have trouble making adequate plans for herself as she tries to fit herself back into her former life or set out in new directions.¹⁸

There has been little research conducted on unmarried mothers in Canada. However, a study in Calgary in 1965 is of some interest and relevance in relation to the current study. Questionnaires were completed by seventy-two unwed

18) Helen Perlman, Ibid. p. 298.

mothers in a maternity home, thirty married mothers under the age of thirty, and a random sample of ninety-seven single girls attending university. Factors studied were: attitudes and behaviour in relation to family, religion, school and peers, factors related to social origin of the subjects, and an objective measure was used to evaluate similarities and differences in the subjects' self-concepts. It was found that:

- a) Unwed mothers in the sample were predominantly from rural or small town origins, were generally from the whole range of the social stratum, and were slightly more likely to be Catholic than Protestant.
- b) Unwed mothers respond very similarly to wed mothers and single college coeds on questions dealing with their evaluations of their parents. Nor were there significant differences found in their attitudes towards church or school.
- c) In terms of social behaviour, unwed mothers are more likely to be socially active in school, but no different from the other groups in church attendance.¹⁹

However, unmarried mothers belong to fewer groups for a shorter length of time, see themselves as having fewer close friends, and tend to date several boys at once, rather than

19) B.J. Hodgkins, "A Comparative Study of Unwed Mothers in Western Canada", in The Social Worker, Vol. 34, Number 3, July, 1966. P. 174.

'going steady'. The measures of self concept revealed that the unwed mothers lacked a clear sense of identity.²⁰

Clark Vincent, in his study of unwed mothers, compared women who kept and women who gave up their children on several counts. His sample was also drawn from Maternity Home populations. He found that the group who relinquished:

- were slightly younger than those who kept, and had a wider age range within the group,
- had more education,
- had higher socio-economic status,
- had more members who were students,
- had fewer girls in semi-skilled or unskilled jobs,
- had fewer girls who came from broken homes and
- came from slightly smaller families.

Fewer of the girls who relinquished came from unhappy and mother-dominated homes. They had more self-confidence and experience in heterosexual relations, and more positive attitudes concerning sex. They were also more strongly in tune with the norms regarding illegitimacy. Family relationships were significantly more positive in girls who relinquished.²¹

Jones, Meyer, and Borgatta have done several studies

20) B.J. Hodgkins, Ibid.

21) C.W. Vincent, Unmarried Mothers, pp. 188-197.

comparing the background characteristics of the girls who keep and the girls who relinquish their babies. They have found that relinquishment of the child for adoption is associated with the age of the mother, and suggest that this may be due to the fact that a younger girl is more influenced by parental efforts to control her decision. Relinquishment is associated also with higher education, especially college education, perhaps suggesting that a girl attending university would be hampered in obtaining her degree if she kept the child. Relinquishment is also associated with religion, in that Protestant girls were more likely to relinquish their children, and with the marital status of the putative father; in that the girl is more likely to relinquish if the putative father is single, although the authors felt this was a less relevant variable in terms of prediction.²² This study did not include non-white unmarried mothers, however.

The present study will hopefully reveal the situation in our population in relation to some of these factors, and add considerations of some others. Are the majority of the girls in our sample of relinquishers young, Protestant, or fairly well educated? Are they from different social strata? Is the putative father about the same age and at about the

22) W.C. Jones, Meyer, and E.Z. Borgatta, "Social and Psychological Factors in Status Decisions of Unmarried Mothers", in The Unmarried Mother.

same educational level as the unmarried mother? Are there many Indian or Metis girls who relinquish their babies? What is the distribution of the different ethnic origins among this sample of girls who relinquished? What kind of jobs did the girls have who were working? Who supported them while they were pregnant, and what living arrangements did they make? At what point in their pregnancy did they seek agency help? What was the incidence of recidivism among these girls? These are some of the questions this research study hopes to answer, so that practitioners may know more about the girls they serve and the resources these girls need to have available.

CHAPTER 111

RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

The design which was used in this study can be classified as diagnostic-descriptive since the aim of the study was to arrive at a profile of the unmarried mother, that is, an examination of one population at a given point in time. Its aim was not theory development, but rather objective analysis of unmarried mothers who have relinquished their babies.²³

The setting of this research project was the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, which states that it serves anyone in the city of Winnipeg who comes to it for specified services regardless of previous residence. Its services are sanctioned by the Child Welfare Act of Manitoba, which basically provides for the protection of neglected or potentially neglected children. This would include children of unmarried parents. It states its aims as follows:

"(The Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg).... Provides services to families and individuals with a view to prevention of neglect, and improvement in care of children in the home. Places and cares for children under agency guardianship, or through arrangement

23) Alfred J. Kahn, "The Design of Research" in Social Work Research, Norman A. Polansky (ed). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960.

with parents. Provides casework services to unmarried mothers and complete adoption services.²⁴

The time period of the study was July 1, 1968 to September 30, 1969, inclusive. The research only dealt with girls whose babies were born and subsequently relinquished in this time period.

The population and therefore the data base of the study was derived from a total of 618. The total number of files obtained or the actual sample worked on was 507. There were 111 files which were unobtainable or 18.0 percent of the total population of 618.

Prior to actual data collection, we found out what information was available from the files of the Children's Aid Society and whether it would lend itself to objective analysis or whether information would have to be supplemented by interviews. The information available from face sheets, recording and other file information influenced the choice of variables to be studied.

Prior to studying files, the attached data sheet was drawn up utilizing the following characteristics to be studied under two main headings:

a) unmarried mother--ethnic origin, age, education, religion, occupation, month of contact, living arrangement,

24) Directory of Welfare Services in Metropolitan Winnipeg.
Winnipeg: The Community Welfare Planning Council,
1962.

financial arrangement, marital status, recidivism.

b) putative father --age, marital status, occupation, education, financial arrangement.

Although not exhaustive, the above associated characteristics seemed most related to the mother's final decision to relinquish her child.

It was intended that the above information be supplemented by interviewing a significant number of girls who relinquished their babies in this time period, by two or three members of the research group. It was hoped that this would keep interviews reasonably consistent. The aim of the interviews was to have been to learn something of the girls' adjustment in terms of attitude towards self, and functioning in social, employment, school, family and peer relationships. Opportunity was to have been provided for girls to state reasons for relinquishment, problems encountered, effectiveness of service, and also suggestions for future services.

Implementation of the above plans to interview did not materialize, however, due to unforeseen problems inherent to the confidential nature of the service provided. The study, therefore, was exclusively based on information derived from files.

Definitions of Terms Used in Research Study:

Unmarried mother - (as used by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg) - anyone, not married, pregnant; common-law relationships, provided the relationship is stable; married women who are separated (a few married couples have been included).

Putative father - father of relinquished child.

Terms used to study the unmarried mothers:

Ethnic origin - as stated by the girl or social worker; if in question, the maternal grandfather's.

Age - the following Dominion Bureau of Statistics categories were used: 14 and under; 15 - 19; 20 - 24; 25 - 29; 30 +.

Education - up to Grade 9; Grades 10 - 12; Grade 12 + vocational; university or professional (including students and graduates); unknown.

Religion - Codes: A. Catholic (including Roman Catholic, Greek and Ukrainian Catholic)
B. Protestant
C. Other or Unknown (including Greek and Ukrainian Orthodox, Jewish, atheist)

Occupation - adaptation of Clark Vincent's occupational

categories,²⁵ as in Chapter IV of this study.

Month of Contact - month of pregnancy during which the girl or someone on her behalf made the situation known to the agency. Numbers from 1-10 were used, 10 indicating that the girl requested services one month after her confinement.

Living Arrangements - Codes:

- A. Parents
- B. Maternity Home
- C. Self-independent living in apartment, for example
- D. Common-law
- E. Other (including domestic placement)

These were arrangements immediately prior to confinement.

Financial Arrangements - Codes:

- A. Family
- B. Welfare
- C. Self (including domestic placement)
- D. Putative Father
- E. Ward
- F. Other (including common-law)

These arrangements were from the point of contact to

25) Clark W. Vincent, Unmarried Mother. New York: The Free Press, 1961, p. 65.

the time of relinquishment.

Marital Status - Codes:

- S - Single
- M - Married
- SP - Separated
- W - Widow
- DV - Divorced
- CL - Common-law

All these categories are services as unmarried mothers by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

Recidivism - This included all mothers who had given birth to more than one child out-of-wedlock.

- Codes:
- 0 - first child
 - 1 - second child
 - 2 - third child
 - etc.

Terms used to Study the Putative Father:

Age - same as above for unmarried mothers with the addition of an "unknown" category.

Marital Status - same as above for the unmarried mothers.

Occupation - adaptation of Clark Vincent's scale for

the putative father.²⁶

Education - same as for the unmarried mother.

Financial Arrangements - all or any assistance to the point of relinquishment was included here. Codes use were: yes, no, unknown.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to those unmarried mothers who relinquished their babies and who received services from the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg between July 1, 1968 and September 30, 1969 inclusive. This time period also represents the period in which the babies were born.

Although the actual number of the above unmarried mothers was 618 according to agency records, only 507 cases were available for study. The remaining 111 could not be located in spite of social worker and clerical staff assistance.

Some of the more important limitations in terms of time, space, and population to be studied, included:

a) The need to complete the study within nine months of the academic year at the University of Manitoba School of Social Work.

b) The fact that the study concerned itself only with

26) Clark, Vincent, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

unmarried mothers serviced by one agency in Winnipeg.

c) The fact that the study population represents not only unmarried mothers from Winnipeg but also many from outside the city and province. Its representation is thus questionable. This, plus the fact that not all unmarried mothers in Canada could be studied, limits the study for purposes of prediction and generalization.

The agency's and University's inability to contribute financially limited the scope and sophistication of the study.

The importance of confidentiality in the situation of illegitimate pregnancies greatly influenced the whole design of the study, particularly the intended interviews. The plans to have agency workers, select and prepare girls from our sample to be interviewed was thwarted by the workers' limited time.

It was hoped that the problem of confidentiality could be overcome by having agency workers select and prepare girls from our population. The workers' knowledge as to what girls were still in Winnipeg and thus available for interviews further influenced this decision to use workers. Unfortunately, workers were not able to provide a sufficient number of interviewees in the given time period. Also, the research group and agency administration failed to clarify

the relevance of the study to workers.

Incomplete file information further limited data collection.

The associated characteristics themselves were limited in that only a selected number were chosen for examination, therefore limiting the profile.

Method of Analysis

The analysis was conducted on two levels:

The first order analysis involved the tabulation of all associated characteristics to determine the sum totals of each and their various percentages.

The second order analysis entailed cross-tabulation of variables to discover or test relationships among variables.

unmarried mother were CHAPTER 14 origin, education, religion, occupation, living and financial arrangements, marital status, race, ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS agency. Information collected about the putative fathers included age, education. During the time period from July, 1968 to September, 1969, there were 618 unwed mothers who relinquished their children to the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. Originally the research group had hoped to study this total group, but were unable to secure data for 111 of these unmarried mothers due to factors outlined previously in chapters 3. Therefore the study was limited to a population of 507. (The code The objective was to obtain a descriptive analysis of the personal characteristics of this group of unmarried mothers, and as a followup, to ascertain the reasons for relinquishment and problems encountered following relinquishment through the use of personal interviews. The latter phase was deleted from the study due to difficulties in obtaining an appropriate sample group. In addition to an analysis of the unmarried mothers, the research group also collected pertinent information about the respective putative fathers, as studies have indicated a possible relationship between certain characteristics of the putative father and the decision of the unmarried mother about her child.

Variables which were selected for the analysis of the

unmarried mother were age, ethnic origin, education, religion, occupation, living and financial arrangements, marital status, recidivism, and month of contact with the agency. Information collected about the putative fathers included age, education, occupation, marital status, and the financial arrangements made for the unmarried mother during her confinement.

The necessary information from the 507 files was transposed in coded form on to the data sheets. From these, an analysis of characteristics was made and will be illustrated in this chapter through the use of tables and figures. (The code and data sheets as well as some tables not shown in the main body of this text are to be found in the appendices). The different tables show the distributions according to the variables selected for study. In addition, various and selected comparisons of variables were made within our sample that were deemed pertinent for analysis. In Figure 1 and Table 1, the ages of the 507 unmarried mothers are shown at the time they first contacted the agency. The concentration of age groupings can be shown most clearly by means of a graph.

FIGURE 1 - DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS BY AGE

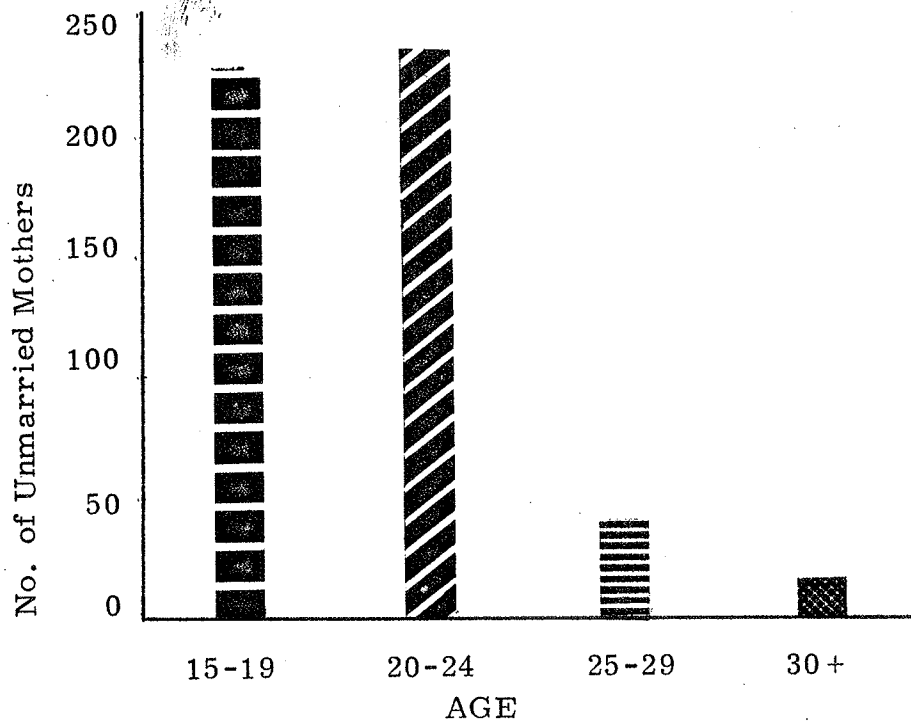


TABLE 1. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS BY AGE

| Age | No. of Unmarried Mothers | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 14 and under | 2 | 0.39 |
| 15 - 19 | 225 | 44.38 |
| 20 - 24 | 228 | 44.97 |
| 25 - 29 | 38 | 7.50 |
| 30 and over | 14 | 2.76 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00% |

The figures compiled in this table indicate that the age groups 15 - 19 and 20 - 24, which are almost identical, comprise the majority of the group under study. These two groups together total 454 of the 507 cases, constituting 89% of the total group. It can be noted that there were no unmarried mothers under the age of 14, in our sample.

Information revealed in Chapter 1, regarding the population increases according to age, points out that although the increase in the twenty year and over age group between 1965 and 1970 is estimated to be 31.3%, while the increase for the 15-19 year old group is only 15.3%, one might expect that the age group 20-24 would be more highly represented in our study. However, our findings do not show this to be the case.

Forty-four percent of the unmarried mothers in our sample were between the ages of 15 and 19. Many factors may have a bearing on the relationship between their youth and their out of wedlock pregnancies. For one thing, young girls are maturing physically at an earlier age than ever before. Also, there are increasing societal pressures from the mass media, peers, parents, and schools, for premature heterosexual relationships between young adolescents.

Some studies have suggested that younger ages are associated with relinquishment of the baby because of possible

imposition of parental controls, which are more likely to generally conform to the general value pattern in society. The older the unmarried mother is the freer she is to express her personal values by keeping her baby.²⁷ However, further comparative analysis is needed before any conclusions can be made in this regard.

Another factor which was taken into account in this study was that of education. The following table indicates the figures and percentages according to our selected categories.

TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY EDUCATION

| Grade | No. of Unmarried Mothers | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Grade 9 and less | 114 | 22.49 |
| 10-12 | 339 | 66.86 |
| 12 plus vocational training | 10 | 1.97 |
| university | 33 | 6.51 |
| N/K | 11 | 2.17 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00% |

27) Wyatt, C., Jones; Henry Meyer; and Edgar F. Borgatta, "Social and Psychological Factors in Status Decisions of Unmarried Mothers", in The Unmarried Mother (ed) R.W. Roberts, New York: Harper & Row, 1966, p. 172.

As shown in Table 2, the vast majority comprising 67%, had attained between grade 10 and grade 12 education. This figure does not differ significantly from the average educational level obtained by the general population. Those unmarried mothers with less than grade 10 education form the next single largest group, 22.4% with those with university education following with 6.5% of the total sample.

For purposes of further clarification the following table will compare the level of education with that of age. In this table the age groupings previously used in Table 1 are subdivided to provide a more accurate breakdown of the largest group represented in Table 1.

TABLE 3. EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, ACCORDING TO THEIR AGE DISTRIBUTION

| | Age | | | | | | | Total |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| | 14-15 | 16-17 | 18-19 | 20-21 | 22-24 | 25-29 | 30-over | |
| G.9 & less | 8 | 28 | 23 | 14 | 17 | 17 | 7 | 114 |
| Education 10-12 | 3 | 47 | 104 | 97 | 67 | 17 | 4 | 339 |
| 12+voc. | - | - | 1 | - | 5 | 4 | - | 10 |
| university | - | 1 | 8 | 13 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 33 |
| Not Known | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | - | 1 | 11 |
| Total | 12 | 78 | 138 | 132 | 96 | 37 | 14 | 507 |
| % | 2.37 | 15.3 | 27.22 | 26.04 | 18.93 | 7.3 | 2.76 | 100.00 |

With reference to Table 2, we found that the age groups 15-19 and 20-24 were fairly equally represented. Further breakdown of these age groupings, as shown in Table 4, reveals that the 18-19 year old, comprising 27.22%, and the 20-21 year old, comprising 26.04%, were the actual ages most highly represented in the sample. Furthermore, the group aged 22-24 was the next largest, representing 18.93% of the total 507. These results coincide with Clark Vincent's observations that the unmarried mother is not as young as is generally believed.²⁸

The largest cluster shown in Table 3 was within the 18-19 age group having grade 10-12 education. At this age a girl would not normally be in school as she would have completed her high school education. This table serves to indicate a more actual level of educational attainment of the unmarried mothers in our sample than does Table 3.

Table 4 will provide figures and percentages to illustrate the ethnic origin of the unmarried mother under study.

28) Clark W. Vincent, Unmarried Mother. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, Inc. 1961, p. 10-66.

TABLE 4. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY ETHNIC ORIGIN

| Ethnic Origin | No. of Unmarried Mothers | Percentage |
|---------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Indian | 33 | 6.51 |
| Metis | 20 | 3.94 |
| English | 120 | 23.67 |
| Scottish | 61 | 12.03 |
| Irish | 42 | 8.28 |
| French | 46 | 9.07 |
| Ukrainian | 65 | 12.82 |
| German | 41 | 8.09 |
| Scandinavian | 25 | 4.93 |
| Dutch | 14 | 2.76 |
| Polish | 11 | 2.17 |
| Other | 29 | 5.73 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00 |

The findings indicate that the English represent the largest ethnic group in the study with 120 out of the total population of 507 or 23.67%. The Ukrainians and the Scottish follow as the next largest categories showing percentages of 12.82% and 12.03% respectively, each of which represent approximately one-half of the percentage represented by

the English. The table shows that the Indian and Metis together comprise only 53 of the 507 unmarried mothers, or 10.45%.

The low proportion of Indian and Metis in our sample was surprising in view of commonly held beliefs based on theories which attempt to explain differences in illegitimacy rates such as the theory of cultural relativism and Wm. J. Goode's anomie theory. The low proportion of Indian and Metis raises a number of questions. Do these findings suggest in fact a fairly low illegitimacy rate among our Indian and Metis people? They may suggest support for the Principle of Legitimacy which holds that all cultural groups view illegitimacy negatively, or they also raise the possibility of an increasing degree of assimilation into the dominant value system of society. Another possibility is that this group is more highly represented in the group of unmarried mothers who keep their babies, suggesting a lesser cultural tendency to relinquish. It may be that they place a higher value on the strength of the family and that there is less stigma attached to the unmarried mother in this cultural group. A further possibility may be that, the Indian or Metis unmarried mother is reluctant to seek services. This may be due to mistrust of a "white" agency, or fear that her child's chances for an adoptive home are reduced because

it originates from a minority group. Also, there may simply be a lack of knowledge of available services.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of possibilities all of which require clarification through further research.

Since religion was considered to be an important variable in relinquishment, the study attempted to isolate the religious factors involved.

TABLE 5. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY RELIGION

| Religion | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| Roman Catholic | 157 | 30.97 |
| Protestant | 314 | 61.93 |
| Other/Unknown | 36 | 7.1 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00 |

The above table shows that the Protestant religion was the most highly represented, with 314 out of our total population of 507, constituting 61.93%.

Our findings are consistent with research which has revealed that Protestantism is one of four background variables useful in predicting relinquishment.²⁹ However, no clear

29) Wyatt, Jones; et. al. (op. cit.) p. 171.

conclusions can be made from our findings as there are other factors which must be accounted for. Consideration should be made of the fact that the general population in the Winnipeg Metropolitan area is predominantly Protestant. Furthermore, in the area of the city where Catholicism predominates, there is a separate agency which provide services to unwed mothers. This may account for the smaller percentage of Catholics in our sample.

Table 6 illustrates the distribution of the unmarried mother according to occupation. The scale used for classifying the various occupational categories was adapted from the classification system used by Clark Vincent.³⁰

Our findings indicate that students represent the single largest occupational group of the group studied. This group comprised 27.42% of the total sample. This might suggest that for this group of unmarried mothers, keeping the baby constitutes a handicap to the continuation of her education, occupation, and marital career. There is also the factor that a student is not in a position to provide financially for the care of a child.

Table 6 shows that secretarial-stenographic, clerical, and semi and unskilled occupations followed with fairly similar degrees of representation namely 13.41%, 17.75%, and

30) Clark W. Vincent, op. cit., p. 88-91.

TABLE 6. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY OCCUPATION

| Occupation | Number | Percentage |
|----------------------------|--------|------------|
| Professional and Technical | 29 | 5.72 |
| Secretarial-Steno | 68 | 13.41 |
| Clerical and Related | 90 | 17.75 |
| Skilled | 48 | 9.47 |
| Semi and Unskilled | 69 | 13.61 |
| Unclassified | 27 | 5.33 |
| Students | 139 | 27.42 |
| Unemployed | 28 | 5.52 |
| Unknown | 9 | 1.77 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00 |

13.61%, respectively.

Information about the unmarried mother's living arrangements was obtained from the files, and compiled in Table 7.

The findings illustrate that 38.66% of our sample lived in maternity homes during their pregnancy. The next largest category, representing 134 out of 507, or 26.43% lived independently.

TABLE 7. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

| Living Arrangements | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------|--------|------------|
| Parents | 99 | 19.53 |
| Maternity Home | 196 | 38.66 |
| Self | 134 | 26.43 |
| Common-law | 10 | 1.97 |
| Other | 62 | 12.23 |
| Unknown | 6 | 1.18 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00 |

The figures and percentages compiled in Table 8 indicate the types of financial arrangements that the unmarried mother relied upon during their pregnancy and confinement.

The findings indicate that the largest group of unmarried mothers were self-supporting. Family supported and public supported follow respectively. As the most highly represented group were those who were self-supporting, it may be that the unmarried mother relinquishes her child because of financial pressures. Relinquishment may be the only feasible choice since she herself cannot afford to maintain her child and equally important, under present Public

TABLE 8. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY TYPE OF FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS MADE

| Type | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Family | 126 | 24.83 |
| Children's Aid Society/Welfare | 101 | 19.93 |
| Self | 195 | 38.46 |
| Putative Father | 44 | 8.68 |
| Ward | 17 | 3.35 |
| Other | 7 | 1.38 |
| Unknown | 17 | 3.35 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00 |

Welfare regulations, she does not qualify for public assistance unless she has two children.

An attempt was made to see what correlations, if any, existed between that of ethnic origin and the kind of financial support used, as well as the living arrangements made. Appendix 1 indicates that contrary to the commonly held stereotyped beliefs about the Indian, or Metis unmarried mother who relinquishes, they are not supported publically to any great extent. The Indian unmarried mother living in the maternity home and supported by the Children's Aid Society

or Welfare total ten in number which is exactly equal to those who live independently and support themselves. If those Indians living alone and supported by the Children's Aid Society or Welfare are taken together with those supported by the Children's Aid Society or Welfare who are living in a maternity home, the total is 15 out of the 53 or the total Indian population. This 28% represents a small number in terms of the total Indian population that is supported by tax dollars.

Further analysis was undertaken of the financial arrangements according to the ages of the unmarried mother. Table 9 will illustrate our findings.

TABLE 9. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY AGE

| | Financial Arrangements | | | | | | Total |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|------|-------|--------|
| | Family | C.A.S./ Welfare | Self | Putative Father | Ward | Other | |
| 14 and under | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| 15 - 19 | 84 | 48 | 58 | 18 | 6 | 10 | 224 |
| 20 - 24 | 39 | 36 | 111 | 21 | 10 | 13 | 230 |
| 25 - 29 | 2 | 12 | 18 | 3 | 2 | - | 37 |
| 30 and over | 1 | 3 | 8 | 1 | - | 1 | 14 |
| Total | 126 | 101 | 195 | 43 | 18 | 24 | 507 |
| Percentage | 24.83 | 19.93 | 38.46 | 8.48 | 3.55 | 4.73 | 100.00 |

As shown in Table 9, the largest group represented were self-supporting girls aged 20-24, making up 21.89% of the total sample. The next most significant group was composed of girls aged 15-19, supported by their families. A fairly high proportion of the unmarried mother in this age group were self-supporting, (11.43% of the total sample or 25.77% of unmarried mothers in the 15-19 age group.) Generally, the distribution according to financial arrangements was not dissimilar to what one could expect in view of the ages of the unmarried mother involved.

Another factor taken into consideration in our study was that of the marital status of the sample population. Table 10 illustrates our findings in this regard.

It can be seen that almost all of the unmarried mothers in our sample (Table 10) were single. Of those not single the separated group represented the greater number although they comprise only 3.35% of the total population. The fact that almost all the unmarried mothers were single is not surprising in view of our findings that the majority were students and under 21 years of age.

In our study we were interested in the degree of recidivism as found among the unmarried mothers who relinquish their children. This is shown in Table 11.

TABLE 10. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY MARITAL STATUS

| Marital Status | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| Single | 466 | 91.97 |
| Married | 8 | 1.58 |
| Separated | 17 | 3.35 |
| Widowed | 2 | .39 |
| Divorced | 6 | 1.18 |
| Common Law | 8 | 1.58 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00 |

TABLE 11. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY RECIDIVISM

| Recidivism | Number | Percentage |
|------------|--------|------------|
| 0 | 408 | 80.47 |
| 1 | 72 | 14.2 |
| 2 | 11 | 2.17 |
| 3 | 7 | 1.38 |
| 4 | 8 | 1.58 |
| over 4 | 1 | .2 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00 |

Our findings indicate that the majority, 80.47% of the unmarried mother in our sample were those who had not previously had a child. Of those who were recidivists, a total of 19.53% of our sample, the vast majority consisting of 14.2%, were made up of those unmarried mothers for whom this was their second illegitimate birth.

Since the recidivists made up approximately one-fifth of our sample population, further information was obtained about this group. The data was examined to see if there was any correlation between ethnic origin and recidivism. The results are shown in Table 12.

Out of the total Indian-Metis population of 53, 26 were found to be recidivists, approximately one-half. This is quite a striking difference when compared to the non-recidivist group in which the Indian-Metis represent only 27 out of a population of 407, or 6.63%. Again, this may indicate a cultural acceptance of illegitimacy on the part of the Indian and Metis, but this is just one of many possible explanations. Although it serves as a possibility in explaining the high representation within the recidivist group, it does not account for the low percentage of Indian and Metis found among those unmarried mothers for whom this was a first illegitimate birth.

Whereas the English were the most highly represented in

TABLE 12. DISTRIBUTION OF RECIDIVIST GROUP, BY EHTNIC ORIGIN
AS COMPARED TO NON-RECIDIVIST GROUP

| Ethnic Origin | Recidivists | Non-Recidivists | Total |
|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|
| Indian | 19 | 14 | 33 |
| Metis | 7 | 13 | 20 |
| English | 11 | 109 | 120 |
| Scottish | 6 | 55 | 61 |
| Irish | 7 | 35 | 42 |
| French | 14 | 32 | 46 |
| Ukrainian | 7 | 58 | 65 |
| German | 7 | 34 | 41 |
| Scandinavian | 9 | 16 | 25 |
| Dutch | 4 | 10 | 14 |
| Polish | 2 | 9 | 11 |
| Other | 7 | 22 | 29 |
| Total | 100 | 407 | 507 |

the non-recidivist group, consisting of 26.78%, they were not as highly represented among the recidivists. Here they comprised only 11% of the recidivist sample.

A difference was found in the educational level between the recidivist and non-recidivist groups. Table 13 illustrates

TABLE 13. DISTRIBUTION OF RECIDIVISTS AND NON-RECIDIVISTS,
BY EDUCATION

| | Recidivists % | | Non-Recidivists % | | Total % | |
|-------------------|---------------|-----|-------------------|--------|---------|--------|
| | | | | | | |
| Gr. 9 and less | 46 | 46 | 68 | 16.83 | 114 | 22.49 |
| 10-12 | 48 | 48 | 291 | 71.49 | 339 | 66.86 |
| 12 and vocational | 3 | 3 | 7 | 1.61 | 10 | 1.97 |
| university | - | - | 33 | 8.11 | 33 | 6.51 |
| Unknown | 3 | 3 | 8 | 1.96 | 11 | 2.17 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 407 | 100.00 | 507 | 100.00 |

our findings.

As shown above, the recidivists had a lower educational attainment than the unmarried mother for whom this was a first illegitimate pregnancy. The former were fairly equally divided between those with grade nine and less and those with between grade ten and twelve. In comparison, the majority of the non-recidivist group had high school education, a percentage of 71.49%. Only 16.83% of this group had grade nine or less education. None of the recidivists had attended university.

Table 14 illustrates the distribution of recidivists according to financial arrangements.

TABLE 14. DISTRIBUTION OF RECIDIVISTS, BY FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

| Arrangements | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Family | 13 | 13 |
| Children's Aid Society/Welfare | 25 | 25 |
| Self | 47 | 47 |
| Putative Father | 10 | 10 |
| Ward | 2 | 2 |
| Other | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 100 | 100% |

Our findings indicate that the largest category represented is that of the self-supporting unmarried mother with a total of 47%. This figure is higher than that represented by the self-supporting unmarried mother in our total population. However, it is likely that the recidivist tends to be slightly older than the average unmarried mother in our sample and hence more likely to be employed and independent from family. One quarter of the recidivist group were supported publically, a figure only slightly higher than that represented in our sample population.

Another variable selected for our study was the time

after the onset of pregnancy when the unmarried mother first contacted the agency. Table 15 illustrates the distribution of unmarried mothers according to the month of their pregnancy at which they made requests for service.

TABLE 15. DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS, BY MONTH OF CONTACT

| Month | Number | Percentage |
|-------|--------|------------|
| 1 | 2 | .39 |
| 2 | 12 | 2.37 |
| 3 | 20 | 3.94 |
| 4 | 44 | 8.68 |
| 5 | 76 | 14.99 |
| 6 | 101 | 19.92 |
| 7 | 83 | 16.37 |
| 8 | 76 | 14.99 |
| 9 | 84 | 16.57 |
| 10 | 5 | .99 |
| N/K | 4 | .79 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00% |

The above table indicates that in our sample only 15%

of the unmarried mothers contacted the agency before their fifth month of pregnancy. Contact in the sixth month of pregnancy showed the highest percentage, 19.92%, but generally, there were similar degrees of representation from the sixth to the ninth month. This may indicate that the unmarried mothers perceived the agency primarily as a giver of concrete services, such as maternity homes, and adoption procedures, rather than counselling or supportive casework services.

In addition to an analysis of the characteristics of the unmarried mother in our sample we endeavored to describe those of the putative fathers involved with out sample group. Since there is theoretical knowledge to indicate that certain characteristics of the putative father are significant factors in the unmarried mother's decision to relinquish her child, it was considered that knowledge about the putative father would provide more information about the characteristics of the unmarried mother. Jones, Meyer and Borgatta refer to the marital status of the male involved in the partnership as being one of four background variables found in their earlier studies,³¹ that is useful in actually predicting the disposition of the decision of the white unmarried mother in the United States. It was therefore

31) Wyatt, Jones; et. al. op. cit. p. 171.

included as well as factors relating to age, education, occupation, status and financial support, in any attempt to study the characteristics of the putative father. In some cases comparison on an individual basis made between the unmarried mother and the putative father. In others, comparison is made between the unmarried mother as a group with the putative father as a group.

The possibility that the unmarried mother might relinquish because of financial reasons led us to consider the matter of contributions by the putative father. The following table illustrates the results.

TABLE 16. NUMBER OF PUTATIVE FATHERS, WHO MADE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

| Contributed | Number of Putative Fathers | Percentage |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Yes | 71 | 14 |
| No | 385 | 75.94 |
| Unknown | 51 | 10.06 |
| Total | 507 | 100.00 |

As seen above, the vast majority of the putative fathers did not contribute toward the expenses of the unmarried moth-

ers during confinement. Only 14% did make such financial arrangements. This offers the possible suggestion that there was a lack of emotional involvement with the putative father. In almost the same number of cases, or 10%, the facts surrounding financial arrangements were not known from our data sheet. Since this data was compiled from the Children's Aid Society files this may imply that the agency is casual about this aspect of the unmarried mothers' circumstances.

A comparative analysis of the related characteristics were made. The following table shows this comparing the unmarried mother's age with that of the putative father.

TABLE 17. COMPARATIVE AGES OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS AND PUTATIVE FATHERS

| Age of Putative Father | Age of Unmarried Mother | | | | | | Total |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|-------|
| | 14+under | 15-19 | 20-24 | 25-29 | 30+over | Unknown | |
| 14 + under | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| 15-19 | 1 | 19 | 12 | - | - | - | 92 |
| 20-24 | - | 106 | 106 | 4 | - | - | 216 |
| 25-29 | - | 16 | 58 | 14 | 1 | - | 89 |
| 30 & over | 1 | 9 | 30 | 10 | 8 | - | 58 |
| U/K | - | 15 | 20 | 10 | 5 | - | 50 |
| Total | 3 | 226 | 226 | 38 | 14 | - | 507 |

It is frequently assumed that the unmarried mother is usually a very young woman who is exploited by a much older man. Previous tables in this study indicate that the majority of the unmarried mother were from the 15-19 and 20-24 in almost the same proportions. Table 17 indicates that in the 20-24 age group, there were 106 and in the 15-19 age group there were the same number and that these age groups comprised the largest aggregate number of any age. In the other instances where there were variations, the age of the putative father was found to be the same, or in most cases, to be within 2-5 years older. This pattern agrees with that of the dating patterns of the society.

A comparison of the educational level of the unmarried mother with her sexual partner is illustrated below.

TABLE 18. EDUCATION OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS AS COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE PUTATIVE FATHER

| Education of P.F. | of the unmarried mother | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------|---------|------------|---------|
| | Grades: 9+under | 10-12 | 12+voc. | University | Unknown |
| 9 and under | 38 | 47 | - | 3 | 2 |
| 10-12 | 47 | 199 | 3 | 10 | - |
| 12 and voc. | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | - |
| University | 3 | 47 | 2 | 15 | 1 |
| Not known | 28 | 45 | 2 | 4 | 7 |

As Table 18 illustrates, the results show the highest group, represented by 199 were found to be in the grade 10-12 group. The education of the unmarried mothers is quite similiar to that of their respective sex partners, thus suggesting similarity in social backgrounds.

Finally, a comparative analysis of related characteristics was made between the unmarried mother as a group and the putative father as a group.

Education was considered to be a valuable variable for comparison and the results are shown below.

TABLE 19. EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE UNMARRIED MOTHER AS A GROUP AS COMPARED TO THE EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE PUTATIVE FATHER AS A GROUP

| Educational Level | Unmarried Mother | | Putative Father | |
|-------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Gr. 9 and less | 114 | 22.4 | 92 | 18.1 |
| 10 - 12 | 339 | 67 | 256 | 50.49 |
| 12 and voc. | 10 | 2.10 | 4 | 0.78 |
| University | 33 | 6.5 | 70 | 14 |
| Not Known | 11 | 1.7 | 85 | 16.9 |

As a group the unmarried mothers had a greater number represented in the high school and under in their educational

level as indicated by a total of 89%. In contrast the putative fathers were represented by 68% in this category and whereas the unmarried mothers who had university education equaled 6.5%, the putative father in this category was represented by 14%.

The results from the study previously showed the relative differences in ages of the unmarried mother and the putative father. A comparison was also made on a group basis as is shown in Table 20.

TABLE 20. AGE OF UNMARRIED MOTHER AS A GROUP COMPARED WITH THE AGE OF THE PUTATIVE FATHER AS A GROUP

| Age | Unmarried Mother | | Putative Father | |
|--------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| 14 and under | 2 | 0.40 | 2 | 0.40 |
| 15 - 19 | 225 | 44.4 | 92 | 18.1 |
| 20 - 24 | 228 | 45.0 | 286 | 42.6 |
| 25 - 29 | 38 | 7.5 | 89 | 17.6 |
| 30 and over | 14 | 2.7 | 58 | 11.4 |
| Not Known | - | - | 50 | 9.9 |
| Total | 507 | 100 | 507 | 100 |

As a group, the age of the unmarried mother is largely represented in almost equal percentages within the 15-19, and 20-24 age categories. However, the single largest age group represented for the group of putative fathers falls in the 20-24 age category. Aside from the latter group there was a greater range of difference in the age category of the putative father than in that of the unmarried mother group. There were 50 (9.9%) putative fathers whose ages were not known. This is almost equal to the number represented in the 30 and over age category, 11.4%. This may imply the relationship was of short duration and of a superficial nature.

An analysis of the occupational status of both unmarried mother and putative father was undertaken on a comparative basis to get further clarification of the characteristics of the unmarried mothers who relinquish as a group and the characteristics of the putative fathers as a group. The findings are tabulated in Table 21.

The results (Table 21) show that within the putative father group the semi and unskilled men were highly represented, comprising 31.2%, whereas students were the largest group of unmarried mother's, represented by 27.4%. Students were the second largest group in the putative father group which at 17.2% was close enough to be considered within the first largest class. Interestingly enough, the third largest

TABLE 21. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS AS A GROUP AS COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE PUTATIVE FATHER AS A GROUP

| Occupation | Unmarried Mother | | Putative Father | |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Professional & Technical | 29 | 5.7 | 40 | 7.9 |
| Student | 139 | 27.4 | 87 | 17.2 |
| Clerical and Related | 90 | 17.8 | 30 | 5.9 |
| Skilled | 48 | 9.5 | 86 | 17.0 |
| Semi and Unskilled | 69 | 13.6 | 158 | 31.2 |
| Secretarial | 68 | 13.4 | - | - |
| Unclassified | 27 | 5.3 | 41 | 8.1 |
| Unemployed | 28 | 5.5 | 5 | 1.0 |
| Unknown | 9 | 1.8 | 60 | 11.7 |
| Total | 507 | 100.0 | 507 | 100.0 |

putative father group represented was the Unknown. This raises a question as to the length and meaning of the unmarried mother's relationship with the putative father. This was one question that the interviews which were originally planned, may have answered.

In terms of broader classifications, it should be noted that if the secretarial and clerical categories are placed

together, this group would represent 31.2% and would be the highest group. This would correspond to the highest group of the putative fathers.

The relationship of marital status of the putative father as a factor in relinquishment has been suggested in earlier studies of illegitimacy.³² Jones, Meyer and Borgatta for instance, suggest the theory that the unmarried mother who has a relationship with a putative father who is unable to marry will tend to keep her child. We included marital status as a variable, to be used in comparing the unmarried mothers who relinquish as a group with their putative fathers as a group. The findings are illustrated in table 22.

In our sample of 507, there were 383 putative fathers who were single, which represents a large majority and hence would seem to give support to the proposition that the unmarried mother will tend to surrender when the father of her child was unmarried. It is also interesting to note that the second largest percentage represented, 10.6%, were those in which the unmarried mother did know the marital status of her child's father.

32) Wyatt, Jones, et. al. (op. cit.)

TABLE 22. MARITAL STATUS OF THE UNMARRIED MOTHER AS A GROUP COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE PUTATIVE FATHER AS A GROUP

| Marital Status | Unmarried Mother | | Putative Father | | Total | |
|----------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|--------|--------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage | Number | Per- cent |
| Single | 466 | 91.92 | 383 | 75.55 | 849 | 83.73 |
| Married | 8 | 1.58 | 46 | 9.07 | 54 | 5.33 |
| Separated | 17 | 3.35 | 13 | 2.56 | 30 | 2.96 |
| Widowed | 2 | .39 | - | - | 2 | .20 |
| Common law | 8 | 1.58 | 8 | 1.58 | 16 | 1.58 |
| Divorced | 6 | 1.118 | 6 | 1.18 | 12 | 1.18 |
| Unknown | - | - | 51 | 10.06 | 51 | 5.02 |
| Total | 507 | 100 | 507 | 100 | 1014 | 100 |

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of any study on the problem of illegitimacy is; 1) to increase the understanding of the problem and of the people involved; 2) to guide policy and practice in dealing with illegitimacy and in striving towards prevention; 3) and to attempt to respond to public concern. However, the exact purpose of this study has been to present an overview of some of the associated characteristics, factors, and problems relative to the unmarried mother who relinquishes her child. In finer terms, we may ask of this thesis: Does it provide some guidelines for the formulation of policy and the implementation of service to the unmarried mother who relinquishes? Are the majority of the girls who relinquish young, Protestant, well educated, poorly educated, employed or unemployed, and if employed, in what sort of employment? Are they concentrated in one social strata or spread out over a wide area? Does knowledge of the putative father add to our profile of the unmarried mother? Do the Indian and Metis groups differ from other ethnic groups that relinquish? What is the incidence of recidivism? These and other questions have been attempted in this research project.

To do this we have used the variables of ethnic origin, age, education, religion, occupation, month of contact with the Children's Aid Society, living and financial arrangements, marital status, recidivism, as well as similar variables associated with the putative father.

The findings of the research study, as illustrated in chapter four of this thesis, do shed some light on our profile of the unmarried mother who relinquishes.

The picture that emerges from the finding is one of a young woman (89.35% between the ages of 15 to 24 years), with a relatively low education or attending high school (66.80% between grades 10 and 12 and 22.49% below the high school range). Concomitant to this finding is the fact that, by and large, the agency serves a non-professional, semi or non-skilled clientele. Thirty-eight point sixty six per cent of the unmarried mothers make living arrangements with maternity homes through the agency. From this it appears that the unmarried mother faces crucial problems concerning her accommodations if she is alone and without help from her family of origin. Financial arrangements also proved to be a significant factor in the life of the unwed mother in that only 19.93% of the population studied were aided financially by either the agency or the public Department of Welfare.

Concerning recidivism, since only 19.53% of the population studied returned to the agency, one could speculate that the vast majority do make a successful adjustment to family life afterwards; that they eventually get married or learn to use contraceptive measure efficaciously. This facet, however, remains unexplored.

The point of contact with the agency is an interesting factor in determining the depth of involvement in the available casework services. Sixty-nine point sixty-three per cent of the total population contacted the agency from the sixth month onward. An unusually high percentage (33.34%) contacted the agency during the eight month onward. Thus, it could be argued that vast numbers of unmarried mothers contact the agency when they can no longer cope with the unplanned or unwanted pregnancy, thus limiting the role of the agency to that of making the necessary legal arrangements for the child's sanctioned appearance in the adoption market.

The proportion of Indian and Metis in the sample (10.45%) was surprising in view of commonly held beliefs based on theories which attempt to explain differences in illegitimacy rates. This low proportion and its possible relevance raises a number of questions which can only be clarified through further research.

The data gathered on the putative father adds some light on the picture of the unmarried mother. Only 14% of the putative fathers contributed financially to the expenses of confinement. This would suggest that they either were contacted by the agency, or the girl worked out an agreement with him about which she informed the agency. By contrast, 86% of the putative fathers did not contribute financially. In the data gathering stage, the research group verified that in most cases the unmarried mothers were unwilling to provide the caseworker sufficient information concerning her partner. In many instances, the unmarried mother had stated "she did not want him (the putative father) involved". This suggests a multitude of emotional factors which could be tested psychologically if an adequate sample group could be obtained. This task was beyond the scope of the study. One could speculate, for example, whether the unmarried mother reacted in this way out of feelings of guilt, insecurity as to whether the putative father would admit paternity, or perhaps, although this would be a small minority, out of ignorance as to the identity of the putative father, given the sometimes casual nature of the relationship.

Table 17 showed that the putative father is of a young age (452 out of 507 were between 15 and 24 yrs. of age). A vast majority were high school students (68.59%). Tables

18 to 22 show the remarkable similarity between the unmarried mother and the putative father in factors such as education, age, occupation, marital status, etc.

A factor which was not taken into account but which could be tested as well in the future, is the possibility of a built-in bias on the part of the caseworker. The services to unmarried mothers and those to adopting parents are integrated into the same unit at the Children's Aid Society. Although the client is not aware of this, and administratively this set-up might be efficient, it could be protested that a caseworker in that unit may inadvertently or subconsciously be gearing the casework relationship toward an eventual relinquishment and subsequent adoption.

The data also raised a number of questions which could only be elucidated through further research: Is the unmarried mother who relinquishes more mature than the one who keeps her child, or are there important personality factors that predicate her decision to surrender? The interviews, as originally planned, could have provided insight on a number of such issues. Further research in this whole area of research for relinquishment by the unmarried mother is recommended.

In conclusion, the research group wishes to state that this project seems to suggest that there are certain per-

vasive methodological problems in research on the unmarried mother in general, and she who surrenders her child in particular. The obvious bias of a small sample, emphasized the need to develop more comprehensive research on the subject of factors affecting the decision of the unmarried mother regarding her illegitimate child.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bernard, Jessie..... Social Problems at Mid-Century. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1957.
- Community Welfare Planning Council, The..... Directory of Welfare Services in Metropolitan Winnipeg. Winnipeg, 1962.
- Department of Health and Social Services..... Annual Report. Winnipeg 1969.
- Dominion Bureau and Statistics..... Canada Yearbook 1968. Ottawa. Queen's Printer Office.
- Ferguson, Elizabeth..... "The Social Revolution in Sexual Behavior and Standards", Illegitimacy, Data and Findings for Prevention, Treatment, and Policy Formulation, New York: National Council of Illegitimacy, 1965.
- Herzog, Elizabeth..... "Priorities in Research on Unmarried Mothers", Research Perspectives on the Unmarried Mother. Child Welfare League of America. New York: 1962.
- Hirsch, S..... "Observations on Illegitimacy", Social Problems, Canadian Profile. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Company, Ltd. 1964.
- Hodgkins, B.J..... "A Comparative Study of Unwed Mothers in Western Canada". The Social Worker, Volume 34, # 3. July 1966.

- Jones, Wyatt C.,
Meyer, Henry J., and
Borgatta, Edgar F..... "Social and Psychological
Factors in Status Decisions
of Unmarried Mothers", in
The Unmarried Mother (ed)
R.W. Roberts. New York:
Harper and Row, 1966
-
- "The Decision by Unmarried
Mothers to Keep or Surrender
their Babies", in Social
Work, 1 (1956).
- Meyer, Henry J.,
Borgatta, Edgar F., and
Faushel, David..... "Unwed Mothers' Decisions
about their babies: An
Interim Replication Study",
in Child Welfare 38(1959).
- Kahn, Alfred, J..... "The Design of Research",
Social Work Research. (ed)
Norman A. Polansky. Chicago:
The University of Chicago
Press. 1960.
- Parker, J.,
and Nelson, F..... "The Unmarried Mother and
Her Child: The Problems
and the Challenge", Ille-
gitimacy: Data and Find-
ings for Prevention, Treat-
ment, and Policy Formulation.
New York: National Council
of Illegitimacy. 1965.
- Perlman, Helen..... "Unmarried Mothers", Soc-
ial Work and Social Prob-
lems. New York: National
Association of Social Work-
ers, (Ed.) by Nathan E.
Cohen, 1964.
- Roberts, Robert N..... "A Theoretical Overview of
the Unwed Mother", The Un-
wed Mother. New York:
Harper and Row, 1966.

- Vincent, C.W..... Unmarried Mothers. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961.
- "Unwed Mothers and the Adoption Market: Psychological and Familial Factors", in Marriage and Family Living, 22 (1960).
- Young, Leontine..... "Personality Patterns in Unmarried Mothers", in R. Robert (ed) The Unwed Mother. New York: Harper and Row, 1966.

APPENDIX # 1

An attempt was made to determine whether there were correlations between financial arrangements, living arrangements and month of contact with the agency. Months were grouped to simplify the presentation. Results are shown below.

| LIVING ARRANGEMENTS | FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|
| | FAMILY | | | CAS/WELFARE | | | SELF | | |
| | 1-4 | 5-7 | 8-9 | 1-4 | 5-7 | 8-9 | 1-4 | 5-7 | 8-9 |
| Month of Contact | 1-4 | 5-7 | 8-9 | 1-4 | 5-7 | 8-9 | 1-4 | 5-7 | 8-9 |
| Family | 12 | 31 | 16 | - | 6 | 3 | 2 | 11 | 12 |
| Maternity Home | 8 | 23 | 21 | 9 | 35 | 30 | 6 | 18 | 16 |
| Self | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 9 | 28 | 39 |

The findings show that of the unmarried mothers who lived away from family and who are self-supporting, 40% come in the 8th and 9th month. In contrast, those living at home and supported by family, 28% come in as late in pregnancy as the 8th and 9th month. Of the 69 girls supported by Welfare/Children's Aid Society and living in Maternity home, 50% came in during the 6th and 7th months.

APPENDIX # 2

An effort was made to see if there were any correlations between financial arrangements, living arrangements and ethnic origin. Furthermore, the financial and living arrangements were broken down to determine more specifically the nature of the arrangement to correspond with each ethnic group. In living arrangements only three of the original categories were used, namely Family, Maternity Home and Self. In the financial arrangements the same three categories, namely Family, CAS/Welfare and Self were kept from the original data sheet, since it was found the others occurred so rarely as to be considered insignificant for our purposes here. In addition the Indian and Metis were grouped together while the Scottish, Irish, and English were included in a British group for further simplification.

APPENDIX # 2 (continued)

| | | LIVING ARRANGEMENTS | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------|---------|------|----------------|---------|------|--------|---------|------|
| | | FAMILY | | | MATERNITY HOME | | | SELF | | |
| | | CAS | | | CAS | | | CAS | | |
| FINANCIAL | ARRANGEMENTS | Family | Welfare | Self | Family | Welfare | Self | Family | Welfare | Self |
| ETHNIC ORIGIN | Indian | 2 | 1 | 3 | - | 10 | - | - | 5 | 10 |
| | British | 39 | 1 | 8 | 30 | 28 | 14 | 2 | 7 | 42 |
| | French | 9 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 7 | - | 2 | 3 |
| | German | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| | Ukrainian | 3 | - | 4 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 13 |
| | Scand. | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | - | - | 8 |
| | Dutch | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 |
| | Polish | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 4 |

APPENDIX # 3

CODE SHEET

1. ETHNIC ORIGIN (actual)
2. AGE
 - 14 and under
 - 15 - 19
 - 20 - 24
 - 25 - 29
 - 30 and over
3. EDUCATION
 - 9 and less
 - 10 - 12
 - 12 and vocational
 - university
4. RELIGION
 - Roman Catholic
 - Protestant
 - Other - unknown
5. OCCUPATION (actual)
6. MONTH OF CONTACT (actual)
7. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

- Parents
- Maternity Home
- Self
- Common-Law
- Other

8. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Family
- Welfare
- Self
- Putative Father
- Ward Children's Aid Society
- Other

9. MARITAL STATUS

- Single
- Married
- Separated
- Widowed
- Divorced
- Common-Law

10. RECIDIVISM (actual)

APPENDIX # 4

DATA SHEET

UNMARRIED MOTHER

PUTATIVE FATHER

| Ethnic Origin | Age | Educ. | Relig. | Occup. | Mo. of Contact | Liv. Arrg. | Finan. Arrg. | Martr Status | Recidi- vism | Age | Martr Status | Occup | Educ | Finan. Arrg. |
|---------------|-----|-------|--------|--------|----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|-----|--------------|-------|------|--------------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |